

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently amended): A system for indicating proper sterilization of a mail article, said system comprising:

a mail article;

a postage stamp affixed to said mail article, said postage stamp having a color indicator;

a sterilization apparatus radiating an energy beam having means for sterilizing said mail article;

whereby when said mail article is sterilized by the sterilization apparatus, said color indicator changes from a first color to a second color.

A' Claim 2 (Original): The system of claim 1 wherein the sterilization apparatus emits an electron beam to sterilize said mail article.

Claim 3 (Original): The system of claim 1 wherein the sterilization apparatus emits gamma radiation to sterilize said mail article.

Claim 4 (Original): The system of claim 1 wherein the color indicator is a design section on an outer surface of said postage stamp, said indicator indicating a first color prior to exposure to sterilization from said sterilization apparatus and the second color after exposure to sterilization from said sterilization apparatus.

Claim 5 (Original): The system of claim 1 wherein the color indicator is a background section on an outer surface of said stamp, said background indicating a first color prior to exposure to sterilization from said sterilization apparatus and the second color after exposure to sterilization from said sterilization apparatus.

Claim 6 (Original): The system of claim 1 wherein said postage stamp provides an indication of payment of postal fees for mailing said mail article.

Claim 7 (Original): The system of claim 1 wherein:

A' said sterilization apparatus emits an electron beam to sterilize said mail article;

said postage stamp provides an indication of payment of postal fees for mailing said mail article; and

said color indicator changes from the first color to the second color upon exposure to said electron beam.

Claim 8 (Original): The system of claim 1 wherein said postage stamp is a meter mark affixed to said mail article.

Claim 9 (Currently amended): A method of indicating proper sterilization of a mail article by a sterilization apparatus, said method comprising the steps of:

affixing; by a sender of the mail article, a postage stamp to a mail article;

collecting, by a postal service, the mail article;
sterilizing, by the sterilization apparatus utilizing a radiation beam of energy, the mail article;
transforming a portion of a postage stamp affixed to the mail article from a first color to a second color when the mail article successfully completes sterilization by the sterilization apparatus;
and
delivering, by the postal service, the mail article to a specified recipient.

AI Claim 10 (Original): The method of indicating proper sterilization of a mail article of claim 9, further comprising, after the step of sterilizing, by the sterilization apparatus, the mail article, the step of:

determining, by the postage service, if the postage stamp has changed to the second color;
sterilizing, by the sterilization apparatus, the mail article if the postage stamp has not changed to the second color.

Claim 11 (Original): The method of indicating proper sterilization of a mail article of claim 9 wherein said step of sterilizing, by the sterilization apparatus, the mail article includes emitting an electron beam by the sterilization apparatus to sterilize the mail article.

Claim 12 (Currently amended): A stamp for indicating proper sterilization of a mail article, said stamp comprising:

a sheet of material having an outer surface and a back surface, said sheet of material being a postage stamp;

said outer surface displaying a color indicator; and

said back surface having an adhesive for affixing said sheet of material to the mail article;

whereby said color indicator indicates a first color prior to being subjected to a sterilization process utilizing a beam of energy for sterilization and indicating a second color after being subjected to a sterilization process.
